

LACDMH Hosts Thirteenth Statewide Conference on Substance Use, Mental Health and Primary Care Integration

By Kathleen Piché, L.C.S.W., Public Affairs Director



Over 800 people attended the Thirteenth Statewide Conference on Co-Occurring Disorders at the Universal Hilton Hotel in Universal City on October 19-20, 2016.

Acting LACDMH Director Robin Kay, Ph.D., LACDMH Medical Director Rod Shaner, M.D. and Marlies Perez, California Department of Health Care Services, welcomed the crowd and made introductions. The theme of the integrated care conference was “Courageous and Compassionate Care.”

“We hope to enhance an understanding of the role empathy plays in contributing to successful health outcomes for clients served by primary care, mental health and substance abuse treatment programs,” Dr. Kay said.

The conference was sponsored by the Los Angeles County Departments of Mental and Public Health in collaboration with LA Care Health Plan, UCLA Integrated Substance Abuse Programs, the Pacific Southwest Addiction Technology Transfer Center, the Los Angeles LGBT Center, Proposition 63, CalMHSA, the USC School of Social Work, California Primary Care Association and the California Institute for Behavioral Health Solutions. The conference explored empathy in healthcare, cultural considerations in evidence-based practices and the troubling issue of homelessness in LA County.

Plenary speaker Dr. Vitka Eisen, MSW, Ed.D., CEO of HealthRIGHT 360, transformed her life after recovering from heroin addiction and now directs the agency where she received care. She has over 27 years of experience in the human services field and a lifelong commitment to supporting people and communities struggling with addiction and incarceration.

Conference Objectives included:

- Enhancing the ability of attendees to coordinate services to improve healthcare integration and collaboration for mental health, substance use disorder and primary care treatment.
- Helping attendees identify characteristics of services and referrals that best support health, wellness and recovery
- Helping attendees identify emerging best practices that address the complex needs of clients with COD.
- Providing “take-home” skills that can be utilized immediately

The plenary presentations, workshop sessions, and displays (featured in the foyer) provided opportunities for conference attendees to interact and network with colleagues and speakers. Conference attendees were able to participate in both experiential and didactic learning workshop sessions.

The 2016 Conference Planning Committee announced that this conference was a ‘green event.’ All planning and execution efforts were done with mindfulness toward our environment and resource sustainability. Conference planning,



DMH e*News

October 27, 2016

marketing, publicity, invitations and registration were created paperless from the start, with this standard at the forefront. Attendees and speakers were strongly encouraged to utilize electronic media for viewing hand-outs and materials, and presentations are available to download.

